

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 05373 011006Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2004

INFO DOD WASHDC

CHUSMTM DHAHRAN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 5373

DOD FOR ISA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MA, RR, SA, US

SUBJECT: SAUDI QUERY ABOUT POSSIBLE INFORMATION LEAKS

1. ON THURSDAY, JULY 31, DEPFONMIN MAS'UD TOLD CHARGE THAT MINDEF PRINCE SULTAN WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE LEAKS TO UNAUTHORIZED SOURCES OF INFORMATION STEMMING FROM THE DOD-CONDUCTED SURVEY OF THE SAUDI ARMED FORCES, (WHOSE FINAL RESULTS WERE PROVIDED TO THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE IN SEPTEMBER 1974).

2. MAS'UD MENTIONED TWO SPECIFIC INSTANCES: (A) A MAGAZINE BY THE NAME OF THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF DEFENSE IN ITS ISSUE NUMBERED 1/75 ON PAGE 23 CARRIED AN ARTICLE ENTITLED "THE MIDDLE EAST--AMERICAN ARMS SALES TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA." MAS'UD STATES THIS ARTICLE SUPPOSEDLY CONTAINED INFORMATION FOUND ONLY IN THE US SURVEY. MAS'UD, HOWEVER, DID NOT HAVE ANY SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE ARTICLE OR THE MAGAZINE; (B) THE INDIAN TIMES MAGAZINE IN ITS ISSUE OF DECEMBER 1, 1974, SPEAKS OF SAUDI ARABIAN MILITARY DEVELOPMENT IN TERMS THAT SUGGEST A FAMILIARITY WITH THE CONTENTS OF THE SURVEY. THE MAGAZINE--WHICH CAME TO THE SAG'S ATTENTION IN DUBAI--
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PAGE 02 JIDDA 05373 011006Z

REPORTEDLY MENTIONED THE UNITED STATES HAD RECOMMENDED

THE SAG DEVELOP A 26-VESSEL SAUDI NAVY CONSISTING OF PATROL BOATS, MISSILE CARRYING VESSELS, AND OTHER MEDIUM SIZED CRAFT; IT HAD RECOMMENDED EXPANDING THE HELICOPTER CAPACITY TO APPROXIMATELY 440 UNITS OF ALL KINDS, AND DEVELOPING FOUR FULLY MODERN MECHANIZED INFANTRY BRIGADES. IN ALL THESE RESPECTS, MAS'UD SAID THE INFORMATION WAS CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE TRUTH TO BE DISTURBING TO PRINCE SULTAN.

3. CHARGE REPLIED HE DID NOT KNOW OF THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF DEFENSE, BUT WE WOULD LOOK IT UP. AS FOR THE INDIAN TIMES MAGAZINE, MOST CERTAINLY ITS DIRECT SOURCE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ANY AMERICAN KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE KINGDOM'S MILITARY DEVELOPMENT. GIVEN THE SCOPE OF OUR SURVEY, MOREOVER, IT WOULD BE EASY FOR ANYONE WHO MIGHT KNOW JUST A LITTLE, AND WHO WOULD BE PREPARED TO SPECULATE A LOT, TO MAKE A COUPLE OF LUCKY HITS, AT LEAST WITH REGARDS TO AREAS THE SURVEY COVERED. DURING THE TIME OUR EXPERTS WERE ACTIVE IN RIYADH, MOREOVER, THERE MUST HAVE BEEN OCCASIONS WHERE THIRD COUNTRY NATIONALS COULD BECOME AWARE OF THEIR ACTIVITIES.

4. MAS'UD SAID THIS WAS SO, BUT NOTED THE INDIAN TIMES MAGAZINE ARTICLE DID NOT TOUCH ON ANY MILITARY AREAS THAT WERE OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE US SURVEY. HE SAID HE WAS NOT TRYING TO ASSIGN BLAME TO ONE PARTY OR ANOTHER, BUT SULTAN AND HE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY LIGHT THAT THE EMBASSY COULD SHED ON THESE PUBLICATIONS. CHARGE ASSURED MAS'UD WE WOULD LOOK INTO THE MATTER.
HORAN

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